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Buckner, Thomas Aylette

The successful agency director from the...

[S.l.]

[1917]

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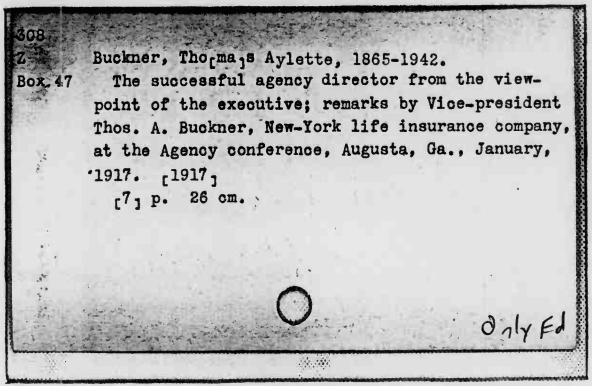
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The successful agency director from the viewpoint of the executive; remarks by Vice-president Thos. A. Buckner, New-York life insurance company, at the Agency conference, Augusta, Ga., January, 1917. [1917]
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THE SUCCESSFUL AGENCY DIRECTOR

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THE SUCCESSFUL AGENCY DIRECTOR

FROM THE

VIEWPOINT OF THE EXECUTIVE

REMARKS BY

VICE-PRESIDENT THOS. A. BUCKNER

NEW-YORK LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY

AT THE AGENCY CONFERENCE, AUGUSTA, GA.

JANUARY, 1917

June 6, 1917 AET

The Superficial Man Is Never Really Successful

The more such men delude themselves with the notion that they are succeeding, the greater their failure in life. Merely getting an allotment, or even getting it first, is not necessarily succeeding. That might be done in spite of the Agency Director, through conditions and circumstances beyond his control, even beyond his power to *influence* or hinder; or such result might be accomplished by methods and practices which would at once brand his work as a disastrous failure.

Nevertheless, securing allotments appears to be the *sole* aim and end of *some* Agency Directors. *Such* are failures. The end does not justify the means. Some such men *believe* themselves suc-

cessful. When they say to the Executive, "See, I have made good, I have secured my allotments, all that you asked, now increase my salary," and receive a firm but respectful "No", they are truly grieved. *They deceived themselves. Others*, not self-deceived, *hope to deceive the Executive.* Sometimes they do—but not for long. When I scan the work of some such men I recall a remark I once heard in a stage skit of a poker game. Five men and one woman sat in. After a while one man remarked, "Someone is cheating here but I don't like to mention the lady's name."

No, my friends, success in life lies far deeper than the mere accomplishment of certain results in a certain length of time, even assuming that the results are honestly achieved. The successful Agency Director must be a credit—not a debit—a credit to Company, to community, to agents and associates, and to self.

The successful Agency Director from the Executive viewpoint is one who understands his responsibilities; who realizes that he is the chief representative of his Company in his community; that his time, his brain and his energies belong to his Company; that his Company's reputation for honesty and fair dealing with policy-holders, with agents, and with the public are largely in his custody.

The successful Agency Director must be a man of character, prudence and probity. He must be a *leader* in right living, right thinking, and right acting.

"As the father, so the son" is an old saying. As the Agency Director, so the agents, and so the agency, is just as true.

The successful Agency Director must have patience with and sympathy for the least efficient agent. Ever as ready to comfort and cheer the disheartened as to congratulate and encourage the enthusiastic and successful. He must play no favorites, be firm in his impartiality,

ready to defend the rights of the *smallest* producer and maintain the rights of the *biggest*.

The successful Agency Director must be loyal at all times to his Company, not only in a large, general way but in the little daily doings and incidents of the business; unwilling to wink at or to pass unnoticed the transgressions of any agent; kindly, firmly reproving the transgressor—be he old agent or beginner—for wrong-doing or mistake, and admonishing against their repetition. He should never allow an agent to believe he will permit the slightest breach of the Company's rules. The Agency Director who permits wrong-doing to go unrebuked is already lost. In matters not involving right or wrong, be not overbearing or dictatorial. The agent must work out his own ideas and they may be better than your own. Give counsel and advice, but also seek same.

And what shall I say about the more material, the more practical, side of our estimate of the successful Agency Director? If his Character, his Loyalty, his Patience, his Sympathy, his Fearlessness, his Energy for, and Devotion to, his cause are all they should be, material success is bound to follow to the full proportion of his genius and ability. These will grow and develop with knowledge, experience and time. Not all are endowed by nature to the same degree, not all can reach the heights of the greatest, but each can reach the heights in the greater or lesser accomplishment of material results, and in his own measure be a successful Agency Director from the standpoint of the Executive of the New-York Life.

To paraphrase from Kipling's poem—

"Each in his separate star,
"Shall work out the thing as he sees it
"For the good of things as they are."

T. A. B.

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